

In paragraph forty-five of the recent NPRM, the Commission questioned how programming diversity should be measured.¹ In the following paragraphs, we discuss the measurement of diversity within radio programming. While we commend the Commission's inclusion of programming diversity in its overall discussion, we find the measurement of radio's music diversity misleading in the Media Ownership Working Group Study, "Radio Market Structure and Music Diversity." The study's authors measured radio music diversity by using the songs played on specific types of stations (formats). The authors stated their study as using a "unique measure of product diversity" and "estimat(ing) concentration's effect on diversity."² The authors found that music diversity "has remained stable" between 1995 and 2001,³ but their methodology was severely flawed.

Simply restated, Williams et al. compared the playlists of similar stations and measured the number of songs ranked the same for the two stations. Playlists are rankings of the songs played on stations and are commonly reported. So, the researchers' data was likely accurate, but their measurements could easily produce misleading results. The researchers used a binary measurement for diversity. If two songs of the same rank matched on two stations, the songs contributed a zero value to diversity, and if two songs of the same rank matched on two stations, the songs contributed a one value to diversity. Accordingly, the programming on two stations were mathematically represented as diverse if one station played a song at the number one rank and another station played the same song at the number two rank. With this measurement, two stations could play **the same exact** ten songs in their top ten but, if the songs were ranked slightly differently, the stations would be measured at the highest possible level of diversity. It should be clear that having the same songs in two stations' top-ten lists does not in any way represent diversity. At some stations, differently ranked songs in the top ten are played a similar number of times per week. A song's rank is a relative measurement and mean different levels of plays on several stations. Accordingly, ranks cannot be given the influence

¹ 2002 Biennial Review—Review of the Commission's Broadcast Ownership Rules and Other Rules Adopted Pursuant to Section 202 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, MB Docket No. 02-277, Notice of Proposed Rule Making, (Sept. 12, 2002).

² Williams, George, Keith Brown and Peter Alexander, "Radio Market Structure and Music Diversity," Media Ownership Working Group Studies: Federal Communications Commission (September, 2002), 2.

attributed to them in the Williams et al. study. This failure in measurement of diversity could have potentially skewed the study's results drastically.

The reasoning for a song-based measurement of diversity is solid. Songs constitute the actual programming for stations and should be included in measurements of diversity. Accordingly, we recommend that the Commission consider a music-based or song-based measurement of radio's music programming. However, that measurement should not be rank-based such as model Williams et al. presented.

³ Id., 17.

In response to ¶40 of 2002 *Biennial Regulatory Review - Review of the Communication's Broadcast Ownership Rules and Other Rules Adopted Pursuant to Section 202 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996* (02-277), we suggest that **non-traditional news programming contributes to viewpoint diversity**. Empirical studies show that the primary interest of non-traditional news programs audience may not be news but entertainment. Nonetheless, audience is given the "human-interest" side of news stories that traditional news broadcast usually excludes.

Baum (2002) of University of California at Los Angeles argues that "through cheap framing, the soft news media have successfully piggybacked information about foreign crises ... to entertainment-oriented information. Soft news consumers thereby gain information about such issues as an incidental by-product of seeing entertainment".⁴ Indeed Baum (2002) sees a continuum of programmes in which hard news is covered. To him, the most traditional news programmes are network TV news. Local television programmes also contain soft news. Soft news programmes do not focus on hard news items but they cover news from a different angle.

⁴ Baum, M. A. (2002). Sex, lies, and war: How soft news brings foreign policy to the inattentive public. *American Political Science Review*, 9(1), 91-108. p.105.

In response to ¶77 of 2002 *Biennial Regulatory Review - Review of the Communication's Broadcast Ownership Rules and Other Rules Adopted Pursuant to Section 202 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996* (02-277), we suggest **Internet be included as a "voice" in any local media market**. Empirical studies show that Internet now becomes an important source of information. Ignoring the use of Internet does not capture media use pattern among media users.

For instance, UCLA Center for Communication Policy at University of California at Los Angeles did a thorough research on Internet usage in the country.⁵ The researchers interviewed around 2,000 households in 50 states and the District of Columbia. The research showed that among Internet users (estimated to be 72% of the population), Internet has become an important source of information. Also, Internet does compete with television in terms of media user time.

More specifically, the report showed that: "To get information quickly" is the primary reason why Internet users go online. 25% of the respondents use the Internet for this purpose. 90.8 % of the respondents think the Internet is an important source of information. Of which, 60% of them think the Internet is either "very important" or "extremely important".⁶ Only 21.1 % of the respondents think Internet is "very important" or "extremely important" as sources of entertainment.⁷ Internet does compete with television for the media user's time.⁸ In this UCLA study, Internet users spend 4.5 hours fewer hours per week on television than non-users.⁹

⁵ UCLA Center for Communication Policy. University of California at Los Angeles. *The UCLA Internet Report 2001 - "Surveying the Digital Future"*. [<http://www.ccp.ucla.edu>.]

⁶ *ibid.* p.33.

⁷ *ibid.* p.34.

⁸ *ibid.* p.19.

⁹ *ibid.* p.32.